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INTERNATIONAL SECURITY / MIDDLE EAST UPDATE
November 4 - 10, 2011

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1. Obama to Emphasize U.S. Role Across the Pacific Rim (11-09-2011)

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — President Obama hosts the annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in Hawaii with the aim of generating opportunities for prosperity and job creation by expanding regional trade and investment, cultivating small and medium-sized businesses and fostering innovation.

Obama chose to host the 21-member forum in his birthplace of Honolulu to highlight America's position as a Pacific nation, senior White House advisers say. The APEC leaders' forum is November 12–13 and is the starting point for a host of meetings and visits over nine days that will take Obama from Hawaii to Australia and on to Indonesia.

At a White House briefing November 9, Deputy National Security Advisor Ben Rhodes said the United States believes that the Asia-Pacific region "is really going to shape the future of the 21st century," which underscores the importance the president places on hosting APEC, but also on his travel to Australia for meetings and to attend the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit in Bali, Indonesia, November 18–19, and the East Asia Summit, also in Bali, on November 19.

On the economic side, the Asia-Pacific is the fastest-growing economic region in the world, Rhodes said. And on the security side, the United States has been an anchor of security in the region since World War II.

Daniel Russel, senior director for Asian affairs on the National Security Council, said during the White House briefing that this is not a trip "to the far-flung corners of Asia. This is a trip to the Asia-Pacific. The U.S. is very much an Asia-Pacific nation."

Since the beginning of the Obama administration, Rhodes said, the United States has worked to strengthen its alliances with Australia, South Korea, Japan and other East Asian nations. And the administration has also worked to engage emerging powers such as China, India and Indonesia, and also to engage with regional organizations such as APEC, ASEAN and the East Asia Summit.

This refocus on East Asian foreign policy comes as the United States winds down military operations in Iraq this year and begins the gradual drawdown of forces in Afghanistan by 2014, Rhodes said.

After the president arrives in Honolulu, he will host a meeting of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) November 12 that aims to achieve broad economic integration across the region while helping the United States achieve a more balanced economy with strong export trade, he said. The TPP involves nine nations that are trying to create high standards for a trade agreement that will encompass the entire region, he added.

Obama will attend the APEC CEO summit with business executives from the region to discuss the economic potential and conditions of member economies, and to address U.S. efforts to tap into that potential, Rhodes said.

During portions of the trip, Obama is expected to hold individual meetings with Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, Chinese President Hu Jintao, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, Thai Prime Minister Yinglak Chinnawat, Malaysian Prime Minister Mohamed Najib bin Abdul Razak and Philippine President Benigno Aquino, and possibly others, the senior advisers said.

Rhodes said the three components of the U.S. agenda are to increase trade within APEC and to strengthen regional economic integration; to support environmental growth and jobs; and to promote regulatory practices to ease trade and investment.

APEC has become the premier economic forum in the Asia-Pacific region. Established in 1989, it comprises 21 member economies from around the Pacific Rim, including the United States. It was created to foster growth and prosperity by advancing economic cooperation and expanding trade and investment throughout the region, according to the White House.

APEC economies account for 54 percent of the global gross domestic product, the broadest measure of total goods and services produced; 44 percent of world trade; and 61 percent of U.S. goods exports, according to the White House.

After the APEC forum ends, Obama is scheduled to meet with Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Mexican President Felipe Calderón for the North American Leaders Summit on November 13 in Honolulu. Rhodes said the summit is focused on improving competitiveness and working together for jobs creation and enhanced trade. Some of the discussion also will focus on preparations for the next Summit of the Americas, scheduled for 2012.

The president travels to Australia on November 16, where he will meet with leaders to discuss a range of issues that include regional security and mark the 60th anniversary of the U.S.-Australian alliance. Australia has supported the United States in Afghanistan, on Iran sanctions and on nuclear

security efforts, Rhodes said. Obama will meet with Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard and give remarks before the Australian Parliament.

In Bali for the ASEAN Summit on November 18, the president will also hold several individual meetings with leaders from the region, including those from India, Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia. Rhodes said the president then will hold a meeting with the leaders of the 10 ASEAN nations. Finally, Obama will attend the East Asia Summit on November 19.

APEC is a venue for addressing economic issues and economic integration in the region, Rhodes said, and the East Asia Summit is the venue for addressing political and security challenges in the region.

In addition to economic and security issues, Obama will also address maritime security and weapons nonproliferation generally and also disaster relief, Rhodes said. This is a region that saw both the Indonesian tsunami after a devastating earthquake, and then the Japanese earthquake and tsunami, he noted.

"Strengthening our ability to work together to respond to those types of natural disasters is very much in the interest of not just the region, but the United States as well," Rhodes said.

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2. Ambassador Rice at U.N. Meeting on Civilians in Armed Conflict (11-09-2011)

Remarks by Ambassador Susan E. Rice, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, at a Security Council Meeting on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, November 9, 2011

Thank you Mr. President. I'd like to thank President Cavaco Silva for chairing this session of the Council. And, equally, I'd like to thank Secretary-General Ban, High Commissioner Pillay, Assistant Secretary-General Bragg, and ICRC Director Spoerri for their briefings and for your dedication to the protection of civilians.

Mr. President, protection of civilians is at the heart of what we should be doing as a Council. In the past year, we have made significant progress in operationalizing norms on the protection of civilians. This Council played a critical role in protecting the people of Côte d'Ivoire in the aftermath of their election. When Muammar Qadhafi moved to make good on his promises to massacre civilians in his own country, this Council acted.

The U.S. is proud to have taken part in the NATO-led coalition that was authorized without any opposition by this Council under UNSCR 1973. This was necessary and appropriate, given that Qadhafi's forces continued to unleash brutal attacks on civilians and civilian-populated areas and hindered the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Thus, in accordance with Security Council Resolution 1973, NATO and its partners protected civilians for as long as necessary.

Of course, every situation is different, and every solution will be different. But the need to act in each instance remains. The situation most immediately confronting this Council is in Syria. The High Commissioner for Human Rights has warned that the Syrian government's appalling actions might amount to crimes against humanity. Her office now places the likely death toll at least 3,500. The Asad regime's crimes are condemned more widely every day. The Gulf Cooperation Council has demanded an end to what it called Asad's "killing machine." The Arab League has worked hard to bring a halt to the violence, but, thus far, to no avail. Yet, this Council has not passed a single resolution even to condemn the Asad regime's brutal attacks on civilians. But let there be no doubt,

the crisis in Syria will stay before the Security Council, and we will not rest until this Council rises to meet its responsibilities. This Council has also failed to act or even to speak in defense of the thousands of innocent civilians in Sudan's Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states, where a brutal military campaign by the government has again resulted in horrific loss of life and a dire humanitarian crisis. Our silence is deafening and inexcusable.

Overall, the United Nations and this Council face challenges both of will and capacity. To build our capacity to protect civilians, we believe the United Nations should advance on five fronts.

First, we must strengthen early-warning systems to detect and draw attention to threats against civilians, especially where the UN already has a significant presence on the ground. Humanitarian workers are often the first to sound the alarm bell. UN peacekeeping personnel have an obligation to do so as well. We have seen some recent promising examples of early-warning and prevention strategies in peacekeeping missions. For example, the UN Mission in South Sudan, with the support of the UN Country Team, mobilized a response to escalating tensions in Jonglei state, including consultations with community leaders and government authorities. This early-warning system may well have helped prevent retaliatory intercommunal violence.

We encourage such early-warning activity in other missions, as part of an overall mission-wide strategy for the protection of civilians. Such strategies can only succeed if they rely on strengthening mission personnel's understanding of and communications with the host communities. A mission-wide strategy also needs to provide peacekeepers with the necessary equipment and training as well as their resolve to use all means at their disposal, including force where necessary and so mandated. My government welcomes the UN's development of training materials focused on sexual and gender-based violence, as well as other tools to help missions improve their protection strategies. The United States helps the UN to survey current practices and has initiated a workshop for missions with civilian-protection mandates.

Second, where prevention has failed, we must bring the evidence of atrocities to light. That is easier to do when human-rights investigators are already on the ground as part of a peace operation or human rights presence. But even where such missions are not present, there are several options available that we can rely upon, such as fact-finding missions, special rapporteurs and commissions of inquiry. And the membership must be ready to take action on such information in this chamber, at the Human Rights Council, and in the General Assembly.

Third, the Security Council can impose targeted sanctions – such as asset freezes and travel bans – on individuals responsible for ordering and committing violence against civilians. Full and effective sanctions implementation can be an extremely useful tool to limit the ability of these individuals to prey on vulnerable populations.

Fourth, we must support societies that have been ravaged by atrocities to strengthen their domestic accountability and, when necessary, to enable international courts to bring those leaders responsible for atrocities to justice, so that all people can live under the protection of law. We have seen firsthand the consequences when those who direct violence against civilians are not held to account – as in the case of Walikale in Congo, where over 350 civilians were raped, but the prosecution by Congolese authorities of alleged perpetrators is still pending 15 months later. Since then, soldiers have continued to commit mass rapes in North and South Kivu, and the number of rapes committed by civilians has increased as well.

Finally, in order to see justice through, from beginning to end, at the international and national levels, we must ensure protection for victims, witnesses, and judicial officers. For example, in the

DRC, the U.S. is supporting MONUSCO's witness-protection project for high profile and sensitive cases against perpetrators of rape, as well as providing support for the Mission's Prosecution Support Cells.

The United Nations has learned valuable lessons in all of these areas in recent years and the United States is studying them carefully right now within the context of the Presidential Study Directive on Mass Atrocities, which President Obama issued in August of this year. We look forward to consulting with our fellow Council members and partners throughout the UN system as we continue our work on it.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I'd like to commend again the brave work of the United Nations and the tens of thousands of local and international UN staff – from peacekeepers to humanitarian workers to human rights monitors – who risk their lives daily to protect civilians in harm's way. We must never take them for granted or underestimate the challenges they face in defense of our shared values and international peace and security.

Thank you.

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3. Obama, NATO Chief Discuss Libya, Afghanistan (11-08-2011)

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — President Obama and NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen met November 7 to discuss NATO's just-ended mission to support Libya and to discuss goals for the 2012 Chicago summit, which will feature discussions on Afghanistan.

A significant part of their meeting in the Oval Office was focused on NATO's defense capabilities to meet future security threats, which is expected to be a dominant theme at the next summit, the White House said in a prepared statement. Obama is hosting the 25th NATO summit May 20–21 in Chicago. The 2010 summit was held in Lisbon November 19–20.

"They agreed that the Chicago Summit should seek to further broaden and deepen NATO's relationships with non-NATO partner nations," the statement said.

"Additionally, the president and secretary-general discussed the important progress made by the NATO-led ISAF mission in Afghanistan," the White House said. ISAF is the multinational International Security Assistance Force that is providing training, security and humanitarian assistance throughout Afghanistan.

Obama and Rasmussen also discussed how the Chicago summit might shape the next major phase of transition in Afghanistan, the statement said.

In a White House speech June 22, Obama said he had ordered the gradual withdrawal of approximately 33,000 U.S. troops from Afghanistan beginning in July as part of a larger process to withdraw U.S. forces as Afghan national security forces assume greater responsibility for the nation's security by 2014. Throughout the process, though, Obama has stressed that the withdrawal of forces will be influenced by actual security conditions in Afghanistan.

"After this initial reduction, our troops will continue coming home at a steady pace as Afghan security forces move into the lead. Our mission will change from combat to support," Obama said. "By 2014, this process of transition will be complete, and the Afghan people will be responsible for their own security."

Obama and Rasmussen's White House meeting occurred one week after NATO's formal seven-month security support mission for Libya ended.

"The president and the secretary-general agreed that by acting quickly and decisively NATO saved the lives of thousands of Libyan civilians," the White House said. The eight-month Libyan revolution brought to an end the 42-year regime of dictator Muammar Qadhafi.

After meeting with Obama at the White House, Rasmussen held closed talks with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and National Security Advisor Thomas Donilon at the State Department. Rasmussen was also expected to meet with members of the U.S. Congress.

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4. Clinton at National Democratic Institute's Awards Dinner (11-07-2011)

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton Delivers the Keynote Address at the National Democratic Institute's 2011 Democracy Awards Dinner, Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium, Washington, D.C.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you. Well, it's a great pleasure for me to be here this evening. And I thank my friend and my predecessor, Madeleine Albright, for not only that kind introduction, but for her extraordinary leadership, and in particular of NDI. Thanks also to Shari Bryan and Ken Wollack for inviting me here today. And I want to begin by wishing an Eid Mubarak to Muslims here tonight and around the world.

I think it's important to recognize that back when the streets of Arab cities were quiet, the National Democratic Institute was already on the ground, building relationships, supporting the voices that would turn a long Arab winter into a new Arab Spring. Now, we may not know where and when brave people will claim their rights next, but it's a safe bet that NDI is there now, because freedom knows no better champion. More than a quarter-century old, NDI and its siblings in the National Endowment for Democracy family have become vital elements of America's engagement with the world.

And tonight I want particularly to congratulate the winners of NDI's 2011 Madeleine Albright Award, the women of Appropriate Communication Techniques for Development. Women risked everything to demand their rights for the Egyptian people, and they deserve those rights extended to them. And so we're grateful for their work, and we hope to see the rights that they've fought for and advocated for enshrined in Egypt's new constitution, and we're proud to support efforts like these through our Middle East Partnership Initiative. (Applause.)

Now, tonight it's also a singular, special honor for me to join with you in remembering three friends of NDI, three people I was lucky enough to call my friends as well: Geraldine Ferraro, a trailblazing pioneer, who lived to the fullest her conviction that women belong at the heart of democracy; Chuck Manatt, a passionate chairman of the Democratic National Committee, who understood that some things are too important to belong to any one party, and with his counterpart at the RNC, Frank Fahrenkopf, put together a bipartisan coalition to found the National Endowment for

Democracy; and of course the indomitable, unforgettable Richard Holbrooke. Now, Richard has many reasons why those of us here tonight applaud and remember him. He died just four days before the desperate act of a Tunisian fruit vendor set the Arab uprisings in motion. And I often wonder what Richard would have made of all that has happened since. I'm sure he would have had a lot to say and even more that he wanted to do to promote the principles that we all cherish. And so these three individuals are very worthy of the awards that you have granted them this evening.

And what a year 2011 has been for freedom in the Middle East and North Africa. We have seen what may well have been the first Arab revolution for democracy, then the second, then the third. And in Yemen, people are demanding a transition to democracy that they deserve to see delivered. And Syrians are refusing to relent until they, too, can decide their own future.

Throughout the Arab world this year, people have given each other courage. Old fears have melted away and men and women have begun making their demands in broad daylight. They have given many of our diplomats courage, too, and I want to single out someone who is here with us tonight. When our Ambassador to Syria was mobbed, assaulted, and threatened, just for meeting with peaceful protestors, he put his personal safety on the line to let the Syrian people know that America stands with them. And he said he was inspired by their bravery. And as he drove into Hama, a city under assault by Asad's regime, the people of that city covered his car with flowers. Please join me in giving our own warm welcome to Ambassador Robert Ford and his wife and fellow Foreign Service Officer, Alison Barkley. (Applause.) Thanks to you, Robert, and to you, Alison, for your dedicated service to our country.

Now, in Tunis, Cairo, and a newly free Tripoli, I have met people lifted by a sense that their futures actually do belong to them. In my travels across the region, I have heard joy, purpose, and newfound pride.

But I've also heard questions. I've heard skepticism about American motives and commitments, people wondering if, after decades of working with the governments of the region, America doesn't — in our heart of hearts — actually long for the old days. I've heard from activists who think we aren't pushing hard enough for democratic change, and I've heard from government officials who think we're pushing too hard. I've heard from people asking why our policies vary from country to country, and what would happen if elections bring to power parties we don't agree with or people who just don't like us very much. I've heard people asking America to solve all their problems and others wondering whether we have any role to play at all. And beneath our excitement for the millions who are claiming the rights and freedoms we cherish, many Americans are asking the same questions.

Tonight, I want to ask and answer a few of these tough questions. It's a fitting tribute to people like Gerry Ferraro and Richard Holbrooke and Chuck Manatt. They liked to pose difficult questions and then push us to answer them. And in Richard's case, that meant even following me into a ladies' room in Pakistan one time. (Laughter.) As we live this history day by day, we approach these questions with a large dose of humility, because many of the choices ahead are, honestly, not ours to make. Still, it's worth stepping back and doing our best to speak directly to what is on people's minds.

So let me start with one question I hear often: Do we really believe that democratic change in the Middle East and North Africa is in America's interest? That is a totally fair question. After all, transitions are filled with uncertainty. They can be chaotic, unstable, even violent. And, even if they succeed, they are rarely linear, quick, or easy.

As we saw in the Balkans and again in Iraq, rivalries between members of different religions, sects, and tribes can resurface and explode. Toppling tyrants does not guarantee that democracy will follow, or that it will last. Just ask the Iranians who overthrew a dictator 32 years ago only to have their revolution hijacked by the extremists who have oppressed them ever since. And even where democracy does takes hold, it is a safe bet that some of those elected will not embrace us or agree with our policies.

And yet, as President Obama said at the State Department in May, "It will be the policy of the United States to promote reform across the region and to support transitions to democracy." We believe that real democratic change in the Middle East and North Africa is in the national interest of the United States. And here's why.

We begin by rejecting the false choice between progress and stability. For years, dictators told their people they had to accept the autocrats they knew to avoid the extremists they feared. And too often, we accepted that narrative ourselves. Now, America did push for reform, but often not hard enough or publicly enough. And today, we recognize that the real choice is between reform and unrest.

Last January, I told Arab leaders that the region's foundations were sinking into the sand. Even if we didn't know exactly how or when the breaking point would come, it was clear that the status quo was unsustainable because of changes in demography and technology, high unemployment, endemic corruption and a lack of human rights and fundamental freedoms. After a year of revolutions broadcast on Al Jazeera into homes from Rabat to Riyadh, going back to the way things were in December 2010 isn't just undesirable. It's impossible.

The truth is that the greatest single source of instability in today's Middle East is not the demand for change. It is the refusal to change. That is certainly true in Syria, where a crackdown on small, peaceful protests drove thousands into the streets and thousands more over the borders. It is true in Yemen, where President Saleh has reneged repeatedly on his promises to transition to democracy and suppressed his people's rights and freedoms. And it is true in Egypt. If — over time — the most powerful political force in Egypt remains a roomful of unelected officials, they will have planted the seeds for future unrest, and Egyptians will have missed a historic opportunity.

And so will we, because democracies make for stronger and stabler partners. They trade more, innovate more, and fight less. They help divided societies to air and hopefully resolve their differences. They hold inept leaders accountable at the polls. They channel people's energies away from extremism and toward political and civic engagement. Now, democracies do not always agree with us, and in the Middle East and North Africa they may disagree strongly with some of our policies. But at the end of the day, it is no coincidence that our closest allies — from Britain to South Korea — are democracies.

Now, we do work with many different governments to pursue our interests and to keep Americans safe — and certainly not all of them are democracies. But as the fall of Hosni Mubarak in Egypt made clear, the enduring cooperation we seek will be difficult to sustain without democratic legitimacy and public consent. We cannot have one set of policies to advance security in the here-and-now and another to promote democracy in a long run that never quite arrives.

So for all these reasons, as I said back in March, opening political systems, societies, and economies is not simply a matter of idealism. It is a strategic necessity. But we are not simply acting in our self-interest. Americans believe that the desire for dignity and self-determination is universal — and

we do try to act on that belief around the world. Americans have fought and died for these ideals. And when freedom gains ground anywhere, Americans are inspired.

So the risks posed by transitions will not keep us from pursuing positive change. But they do raise the stakes for getting it right. Free, fair, and meaningful elections are essential — but they are not enough if they bring new autocrats to power or disenfranchise minorities. And any democracy that does not include half its population — its women — is a contradiction in terms. Durable democracies depend on strong civil societies, respect for the rule of law, independent institutions, free expression, and a free press. Legitimate political parties cannot have a militia wing and a political wing. Parties have to accept the results of free and fair elections. And this is not just in the Middle East. In Liberia, the leading opposition party is making unsubstantiated charges of fraud and refusing to accept first round voting in which it came in second. And this is already having harmful consequences on the ground. We urge all parties in Liberia to accept the will of the people in the next round of voting tomorrow. That is what democracy anywhere requires.

And that brings me to my second question. Why does America promote democracy one way in some countries and another way in others? Well, the answer starts with a very practical point: situations vary dramatically from country to country. It would be foolish to take a one-size-fits-all approach and barrel forward regardless of circumstances on the ground. Sometimes, as in Libya, we can bring dozens of countries together to protect civilians and help people liberate their country without a single American life lost. In other cases, to achieve that same goal, we would have to act alone, at a much greater cost, with far greater risks, and perhaps even with troops on the ground.

But that's just part of the answer. Our choices also reflect other interests in the region with a real impact on Americans' lives — including our fight against al-Qaida, defense of our allies, and a secure supply of energy. Over time, a more democratic Middle East and North Africa can provide a more sustainable basis for addressing all three of those challenges. But there will be times when not all of our interests align. We work to align them, but that is just reality.

As a country with many complex interests, we'll always have to walk and chew gum at the same time. That is our challenge in a country like Bahrain, which has been America's close friend and partner for decades. And yet, President Obama and I have been frank, in public and in private, that mass arrests and brute force are at odds with the universal rights of Bahrain's citizens and will not make legitimate calls for reform go away. Meaningful reform and equal treatment for all Bahrainis are in Bahrain's interest, in the region's interest, and in ours — while endless unrest benefits Iran and extremists. The government has recognized the need for dialogue, reconciliation, and concrete reforms. And they have committed to provide access to human rights groups, to allow peaceful protest, and to ensure that those who cross lines in responding to civil unrest are held accountable. King Hamad called for an independent commission of inquiry, which will issue its report soon. And we do intend to hold the Bahraini Government to these commitments and to encourage the opposition to respond constructively to secure lasting reform.

We also have candid conversations with others in the neighborhood, like Saudi Arabia — a country that is key to stability and peace — about our view that democratic advancement is not just possible but a necessary part of preparing for the future.

Fundamentally, there is a right side of history. And we want to be on it. And — without exception — we want our partners in the region to reform so that they are on it as well. Now, we don't expect countries to do this overnight, but without reforms, we are convinced their challenges will only grow. So it is in their interest to begin now.

These questions about our interests and consistency merge in a third difficult question: How will America respond if and when democracy brings to power people and parties we disagree with?

We hear these questions most often when it comes to Islamist religious parties. Now, of course, I hasten to add that not all Islamists are alike. Turkey and Iran are both governed by parties with religious roots, but their models and behavior are radically different. There are plenty of political parties with religious affiliations — Hindu, Christian, Jewish, Muslim — that respect the rules of democratic politics. The suggestion that faithful Muslims cannot thrive in a democracy is insulting, dangerous, and wrong. They do it in this country every day.

Now, reasonable people can disagree on a lot, but there are things that all parties, religious and secular, must get right — not just for us to trust them, but most importantly for the people of the region and of the countries themselves to trust them to protect their hard-won rights.

Parties committed to democracy must reject violence; they must abide by the rule of law and respect the freedoms of speech, religion, association, and assembly; they must respect the rights of women and minorities; they must let go of power if defeated at the polls; and in a region with deep divisions within and between religions, they cannot be the spark that starts a conflagration. In other words, what parties call themselves is less important to us than what they actually do. We applaud NDI for its work to arrive at a model code of conduct for political parties across the political spectrum and around the globe. We need to reinforce these norms and to hold people accountable for following them.

In Tunisia, an Islamist party has just won a plurality of the votes in an open, competitive election. Its leaders have promised to embrace freedom of religion and full rights for women. To write a constitution and govern, they will have to persuade secular parties to work with them. And as they do, America will work with them, too, because we share the desire to see a Tunisian democracy emerge that delivers for its citizens and because America respects the right of the Tunisian people to choose their own leaders.

And so we move forward with clear convictions. Parties and candidates must respect the rules of democracy, to take part in elections, and hold elective office. And no one has the right to use the trappings of democracy to deny the rights and security of others. People throughout the region worry about this prospect, and so do we. Nobody wants another Iran. Nobody wants to see political parties with military wings and militant foreign policies gain influence. When members of any group seek to oppress their fellow citizens or undermine core democratic principles, we will stand on the side of the people who push back to defend their democracy.

And that brings me to my next question: What is America's role in the Arab Spring? These revolutions are not ours. They are not by us, for us, or against us, but we do have a role. We have the resources, capabilities, and expertise to support those who seek peaceful, meaningful, democratic reform. And with so much that can go wrong, and so much that can go right, support for emerging Arab democracies is an investment we cannot afford not to make.

Now, of course, we have to be smart in how we go about it. For example, as tens of millions of young people enter the job market each year, we recognize that the Arab political awakening must also deliver an economic awakening. And we are working to help societies create jobs to ensure that it does. We are promoting trade, investment, regional integration, entrepreneurship, and economic reforms. We are helping societies fight corruption and replace the old politics of patronage with a new focus on economic empowerment and opportunity. And we are working with Congress on debt

relief for Egypt and loan guarantees for Tunisia so that these countries can invest in their own futures.

We also have real expertise to offer as a democracy, including the wisdom that NDI has gleaned from decades of working around the globe to support democratic transitions. Democracies, after all, aren't born knowing how to run themselves. In a country like Libya, Qadhafi spent 42 years hollowing out every part of his government not connected to oil or to keeping him in power. Under the Libyan penal code, simply joining an NGO could be punishable by death. When I traveled last month to Libya, the students I met at Tripoli University had all sorts of practical, even technical, questions: How do you form a political party? How do you ensure women's participation in government institutions? What recommendations do you have for citizens in a democracy?

These are questions NDI and its kindred organizations, many of whom are represented here tonight, are uniquely qualified to help new democracies answer. NDI has earned a lot of praise for this work, but also a lot of pushback that stretches far beyond the Arab world. In part, this resistance comes from misconceptions about what our support for democracy does and does not include.

The United States does not fund political candidates or political parties. We do offer training to parties and candidates committed to democracy. We do not try to shift outcomes or impose an American model. We do support election commissions, as well as nongovernmental election monitors, to ensure free and fair balloting. We help watchdog groups learn their trade. We help groups find the tools to exercise their rights to free expression and assembly, online and off. And of course we support civil society, the lifeblood of democratic politics.

But in part, the pushback comes from autocrats around the world wondering if the next Tahrir Square will be their capital square, and some are cracking down when they should be opening up. Groups like NDI are no strangers to pressure, and neither are the brave local groups you partner with. And I want you to know that as the pressure on you increases, our support will not waver.

And I want to offer a special word of thanks for NDI's efforts to empower women across the Middle East and beyond. Just last week, the World Economic Forum released a report on the remarkable benefits countries see when they bridge the social, economic, and political gap separating women from men, and helping them get there is a priority for the State Department and for me personally. Graduates of NDI training programs designed to help women run for office now sit in local councils and parliaments from Morocco to Kuwait.

But we all know a great deal of work lies ahead to help all people, women and men, find justice and opportunity as full participants in new democratic societies. Along with our economic and technical help, America will also use our presence, influence, and global leadership to support change. And later this week, I am issuing new policy guidance to our embassies across the region to structure our efforts.

In Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya, we are working to help citizens safeguard the principles of democracy. That means supporting the forces of reconciliation rather than retribution. It means defending freedom of expression when bloggers are arrested for criticizing public officials. It means standing up for tolerance when state-run television fans sectarian tensions. And it means that when unelected authorities say they want to be out of the business of governing, we will look to them to lay out a clear roadmap and urge them to abide by it.

Where countries are making gradual reforms, we have frank conversations and urge them to move faster. It's good to hold multi-party elections and allow women to take part. It's better when those

elections are meaningful and parliaments have real powers to improve people's lives. Change needs to be tangible and real. When autocrats tell us the transition to democracy will take time, we answer, "Well, then let's get started."

And those leaders trying to hold back the future at the point of a gun should know their days are numbered. As Syrians gather to celebrate a sacred holiday, their government continues to shoot people in the streets. In the week since Bashar al-Asad said he accepted the terms of an Arab League peace plan to protect Syrian civilians, he has systematically violated each of its basic requirements. He has not released all detainees. He has not allowed free and unfettered access to journalists or Arab League monitors. He has not withdrawn all armed forces from populated areas. And he has certainly not stopped all acts of violence. In fact, the regime has increased violence against civilians in places like the city of Homs. Now, Asad may be able to delay change. But he cannot deny his people's legitimate demands indefinitely. He must step down; and until he does, America and the international community will continue to increase pressure on him and his brutal regime.

And for all of Iran's bluster, there is no country in the Middle East where the gulf between rulers and ruled is greater. When Iran claims to support democracy abroad, then kills peaceful protestors in the streets of Tehran, its hypocrisy is breathtaking and plain to the people of the region.

And there is one last question that I'm asked, in one form or another, all the time: What about the rights and aspirations of the Palestinians? Israelis and Palestinians are not immune to the profound changes sweeping the region. And make no mistake, President Obama and I believe that the Palestinian people — just like their Arab neighbors, just like Israelis, just like us — deserve dignity, liberty, and the right to decide their own future. They deserve an independent, democratic Palestinian state of their own, alongside a secure Jewish democracy next door. And we know from decades in the diplomatic trenches that the only way to get there is through a negotiated peace — a peace we work every day to achieve, despite all the setbacks.

Of course, we understand that Israel faces risks in a changing region — just as it did before the Arab Spring began. And it will remain an American priority to ensure that all parties honor the peace treaties they have signed and commitments they have made. And we will always help Israel defend itself. We will address threats to regional peace whether they come from dictatorships or democracies. But it would be shortsighted to think either side can simply put peacemaking on hold until the current upheaval is done. The truth is, the stalemate in the Arab-Israeli conflict is one more status quo in the Middle East that cannot be sustained.

This brings me to my last and perhaps most important point of all. For all the hard questions I've asked and tried to answer on behalf of the United States, the most consequential questions of all are those the people and leaders of the region will have to answer for themselves. Because ultimately, it is up to them. It is up to them to resist the calls of demagogues, to build coalitions, to keep faith in the system even when they lose at the polls, and to protect the principles and institutions that ultimately will protect them. Every democracy has to guard against those who would hijack its freedoms for ignoble ends. Our founders and every generation since have fought to prevent that from happening here. The founding fathers and mothers of Arab revolutions must do the same. No one bears a greater responsibility for what happens next.

When Deputy Secretary Bill Burns addressed the National Endowment for Democracy over the summer, he recounted the story of an Egyptian teenager who told her father a few years back that she wanted to spend her life bringing democracy to Egypt. "Good," her father said, "because then you will always have a job." (Laughter.)

Now, we should never fall prey to the belief that human beings anywhere are not ready for freedom. In the 1970s, people said Latin America and East Asia were not ready. Well, the 1980s began proving them wrong. In the 1980s, it was African soil where democracy supposedly couldn't grow. And the 1990s started proving them wrong. And until this year, some people said Arabs don't really want democracy. Well, starting in 2011, that too is being proved wrong. And funnily enough, it proved that Egyptian father right, because we all still have a job to do.

So we have to keep at it. We have to keep asking the tough questions. We have to be honest with ourselves and with each other about the answers we offer. And we cannot waver in our commitment to help the people of the Middle East and North Africa realize their own God-given potentials and the dreams they risked so much to make real.

And on this journey that they have begun, the United States will be their partner. And of the many tools at our disposal — the National Endowment and NDI and all of the family of organizations that were created three decades ago to help people make this journey successfully — will be right there.

I heard Madeleine say when she introduced me that I defend NDI. Well, I do. And I also defend IRI. I defend those organizations that we have created, that the American taxpayers pay for, who try to do what needs to be done to translate the rhetoric and the calls for democracy into the reality, step by step. And we have to be reminded from time to time that it truly is — or at least can seem to be — a foreign language. Like some of you, I've met with the young people who started these revolutions. And they are still passionate, but perhaps not clear about what it takes to translate that passion into reality within a political system.

So there are going to be a lot of bumps along this road. But far better that we travel this path, that we do what we can to make sure that our ideals and values, our belief and experience with democracy, are shared widely and well. It's an exciting time. It's an uncertain time. But it's a good time for the United States of America to be standing for freedom and democracy. And I thank you all for making that journey possible. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

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5. Dempsey Details Vision of 2020 Military Strategy (11-07-2011)

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md., Nov. 7, 2011 – Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey gave National Guard leaders the CliffsNotes version of U.S. military strategy for 2020 during a talk at the Guard's Leadership Conference here today.

Leaders must look beyond near-term problems, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said, addressing those while keeping an eye to the future to build the type of forces needed for national defense.

The idea of building for one contingency has to be a thing of the past, Dempsey said. The Cold War strategy called for the military to combat the Soviet Union. The post-Cold War strategy called for the military to be able to fight two major contingencies near simultaneously.

Today, the range of threats are different. "We're never going to try to build a force that's only capable of doing one thing at a time," he said. "That would be silly. It would be ill advised."

The military has to figure how to build a force with the capabilities to do far more than one thing, he said, and Pentagon planners are working on it.

The second thing driving the strategy is geographical priorities. "We've been focused and we've prioritized the Middle East, but there is every reason to believe that the next decade will see demographic shifts and economic shifts and military shifts into the Pacific," he said.

Dempsey stressed that the shift in focus does not mean the military will ignore other areas of the world. "We are a global power," he said, adding that the United States must pay attention to other areas of the world, and will.

A third change in strategy will be to reshape the relationship among active, Guard and reserve forces. "This strategy will cause us to reconsider, re-examine and re-articulate -- and then resource -- the relationship among the active, Guard and reserve," Dempsey said. "You are the part of the force that allows us to take some risks in other parts of the force."

The fourth change is among general operations and special operations forces. Historically, the missions have been distinct. But the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have merged the missions with general operations forces often working hand-in-glove with special operators and vice versa, Dempsey said.

"We've seen a merging of those capabilities to the great benefit of our missions and the great benefit of national security," he said.

Finally, the strategy must deal with the whole issue of cyber warfare, Dempsey said. It cannot be a one-off problem, he said, adding that the cyber world is vital for the military and more needs to be done to address it.

Biographies:
Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey

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6. State Dept. Fact Sheet on Chemical Weapons Convention (11-03-2011)

The Chemical Weapons Convention: Eliminating a Whole Category of Weapons of Mass Destruction

"At the end of the Cold War, the United States joined together with other nations in the Chemical Weapons Convention to state in unequivocal terms that we will end our chemical weapons programs and destroy existing stockpiles, precursor chemicals, production facilities and weapons delivery systems."

– Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which entered into force on April 29, 1997, is a landmark agreement that has proved its effectiveness in enhancing international security.

The Chemical Weapons Convention prohibits:

• Developing, producing, acquiring, stockpiling, or retaining chemical weapons.

• The direct or indirect transfer of chemical weapons.

• Chemical weapons use or military preparation for use.

• Assisting, encouraging, or inducing other states to engage in CWC-prohibited activity.

• The use of riot control agents "as a method of warfare."

The Convention's Reach

The CWC, officially the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction, has 188 Member States, including the United States – making it nearly universal. Building on earlier agreements, like the Geneva Protocol of 1925, which prohibited the use of chemical weapons, the CWC bans an entire category of weapons of mass destruction.

Convention Requirements

The CWC requires the declaration and verified destruction of existing chemical weapons (CW) and implements a comprehensive inspection regime for both government and private chemical facilities to verify that chemical weapons are not being produced.

Verification and Assistance

The CWC has a strong verification regime which provides for investigations of the alleged use of CW and challenge inspections at any location inside a Member State's borders. The Treaty's implementation process is designed to include minimal intrusion into Member States' economic or technological development. In addition to prohibiting the development and use of CW, the Treaty contains provisions for assistance and protection against these weapons.

Global Progress

Under international verification, stockpiles and production facilities are steadily being eliminated.

Since 1997:

• Over 60 percent of declared global stockpiles of chemical weapons have been destroyed.

• Over 2,000 inspections of declared chemical and related industries have taken place.

U.S. Commitment

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton has made clear that the United States is committed to the complete elimination of chemical weapons stockpiles in the United States and around the world. She has said, "To date, we have already destroyed 89 percent of our original chemical weapons stockpile. We reaffirm our commitment to finish the job as quickly as possible in accordance with national and treaty requirements that ensure the safety of people and the protection of the environment."

Continued Vigilance

The United States will continue to cooperate closely with the other Member States of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and work toward complete elimination in the United States and around the world. The international community must continue to speak with one voice and remain vigilant, so these weapons pose no threat to people in the United States or anywhere.